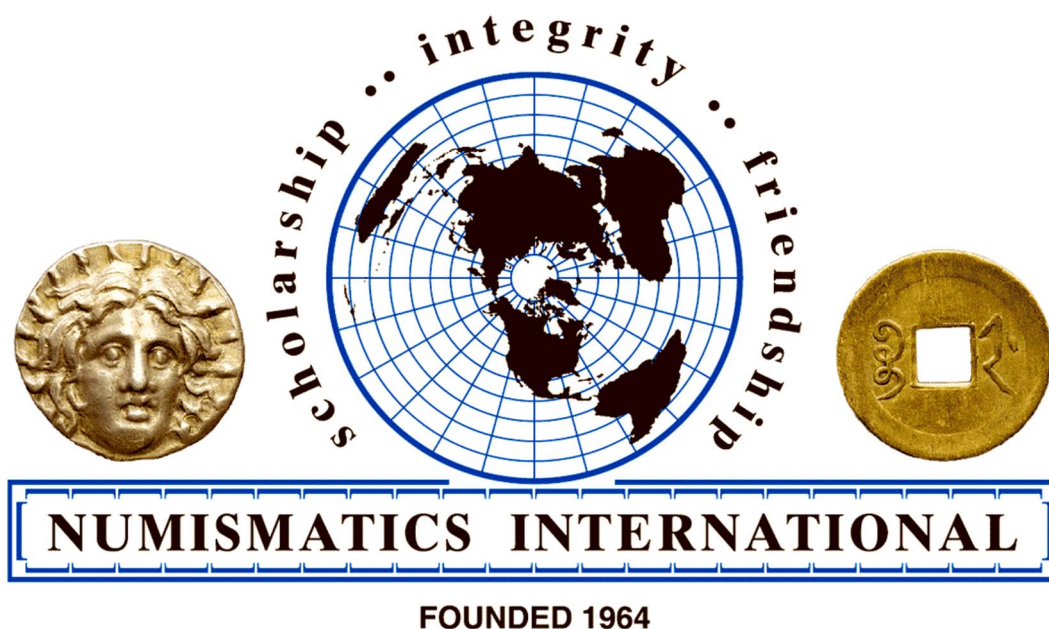


NI Bulletin

A Publication of Numismatics International Inc.

Volume 50 Nos. 11 / 12



November / December 2015
\$4.00

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ISSN: 0197-3088 Copyright 2015

Numismatics International, P.O. Box 570842, Dallas, TX USA 75357-0842

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Welcome to this the final edition of 2015 which completes 50 years of the NI Bulletin. In this issue we have contributions from 3 members. Robert Ronus presents a beautiful unpublished double taler from Transylvania. Dale Seppa has investigated a mystery among Latin American numismatics which is the “AR” counterstamp on Ecuador coins. He has done a wonderful job of laying out this mystery. Your editor writes about a gold medal awarded to the Princess of Piedmont Marie-José which was a joy to research and write but was not easy sorting through politics as she was a member of the royal family in fascist Italy. By the time you read this I should have delivered a lecture entitled “Mysteries of Colombian Cobs” at Daniel Sedwick’s Treasure Auction 18; two of those mysteries are presented as articles here in the bulletin including “mitades” which until now has been an unknown denomination of the cob series. We also have a press release from the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe announcing the demise of the Zimbabwe dollar which is something I’ve been watching and when you read it try to keep track of the zeros. You can read about some wonderful Roman coins from the Mike Gasvoda collection sold by Numismatica Ars Classica. Further, I’ve selected a few medal articles which I hope you find interesting.

As always I hope you enjoy your NI bulletin and visit the NI website to read it in color.
<http://numis.org>

Herman

An Unpublished 2 Taler of Transylvania

Robert Ronus, NI #LM139

The NI Bulletin published an article by me on a spectacular unpublished 1662 4 Taler coin of Michael Apafi of Transylvania in the May/June 2013 issue. I recently had the opportunity to examine a similar, not quite as spectacular but still beautiful and impressive 2 Taler struck by the same ruler in 1678 which also appears to be unpublished.



Obverse: “MICH ✠ APAFI ✠ D ✠ G ✠ PRIN : TR .”. Half-fig. rt. in feathered cap with lion head on shoulder holding scepter, breaking out of circle (rosettes are four petal).
Reverse: “PAR : REG : HUN : Do (lord of part of the kingdom of Hungary) ET • SIC : COMES (and count of the Szecklers) • 1678”. Crowned Transylvanian arms (the Szeckler sun and Hungarian half eagle on the left and on the right the crescent of the Szecklers and 7 city gates of the 7 Saxon cities of Transylvania, with the Apafi arms (vine over helmet transfixing sword) in center, in elaborate frame; below in legend

in oval A : I (=Alba Iulia) over lily. Edge: plain. The coin is about 4 mm thick. 57.48 g. 43.75 mm.

As indicated on the reverse, the coin was struck in Alba Iulia, Weissenburg in German, a relatively rare mint. In contrast the 4 Taler featured in the previous article was struck in Hermannstadt and bears that city's crossed sword arms on its reverse—see photo below.



Alba Iulia is today a Romanian city of about 56,000 people but it has a long multinational history. It was a provincial capital in the Roman Empire under the name of Apulum. Slavs and Romanians called it Bălgrad (white city or white castle). After the Hungarians invaded the region, a Hungarian regent named Gyula (Jula, Geula) built the capital of his dukedom there during the 10th century. The Hungarians called the city Gyulafehérvár, meaning the white castle or city of Gyula, sometimes abbreviated to Fehérvár. In due course this would be Latinized into Alba Julia, white Julia, the name in Romanian today. However, the Hungarian rulers of Transylvania encouraged the immigration of German colonists to develop the principality and build up the population to defend it against Turkish invaders. The Germans called the city Weissenburg (again, white castle). Alba Iulia became the capital of the Principality of Transylvania in 1541, and remained so until 1690. Later, after Transylvania had become part of the Austrian Habsburg Empire, they renamed the city Karlsburg in 1715 in honor of Emperor Charles VI. When Austria-Hungary ended up on the losing side in World War I, the Romanians took over Transylvania and the city became Alba Iulia, its name today. Almost all the Germans and most of the Hungarians have now left and the population is now over 95% Romanian.

Transylvania struck coins in no less than 11 mints. They all have different names in German, Hungarian and Romanian. All are today in Romania except where indicated.

Bistritz/Besztercze/Bistrița
Fogarasch/Fogaras/ Făgăraș,
Hermannstadt/Nagyszeben/Sibiu
Kaschau/Kassa/Košice - now in Slovakia
Klausenburg/Kolosvár/Cluj
Kremnitz/Körmöcbánya/Kremnica - now in Slovakia
Kronstadt/Brassó/Brașov
Neustadt/Nagybánya/Baia Mare
Schässburg/Segesvár/Sighișoara
Strassburg/Nagy-Enyed/Aiud
Weissenburg (later Karlsburg)/Gyulafehérvár/Alba Iulia

The majority of Michael Apafi's coins were struck in Hermannstadt and Kronstadt. However, some were also struck at Schässburg, Fogarasch, Klausenburg, Bistritz, Strassburg and Weissenburg.

To return to the coin, Davenport lists a 2 Taler for 1666 and 1667 and a 2 Taler Klippe for 1664, 1665, 1667, 1668, 1670, 1672 (2 types), 1673 and 1683. Only the 1683 klippe has the AI mintmark of Weissenburg. Apart from being a klippe, it is similar to the coin featured in this article. However, the half figure on the obverse is thinner and his elbow does not break into the legend. The elaborate frame on the reverse is slightly different and there are minor differences in the legends and punctuation. Krause follows Davenport.

Resch, the old standard work on Transylvanian coins, and Wormser do not list any 2 Taler with the AI mintmark.

Furthermore, although they have Weissenburg single Taler for later years, none of them list a 1672 issue and the types are slightly different. Not only the coin but also the die seems unrecorded.

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NI

Press Statement
Demonetization of the Zimbabwe Dollar
Dr J P Mangudya, Governor, Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe

Welcome Remarks

Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe. This Press Conference has been called to provide an update on the process for the demonetisation of the Zimbabwe dollar in pursuant to Sections 41 (2) and 44 (3) of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Act [Chapter 22:25].



Demonetisation Process

The demonetisation of the Zimbabwe dollar was pronounced by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development in the 2014 National Budget as well as in the Mid-term Fiscal Review and in my January 2015 Monetary Policy Statement.

A lot of work has been done since January 2015, culminating in the commencement of the demonetisation process that is due to start on 15 June 2015 and ending on 30 September 2015. The work involved banks supplying the information relating to bank balances and the Reserve Bank authenticating these with the information which was already in its possession.

A Statutory Instrument to deal with the Demonetisation of the Zimbabwe dollar and will be gazetted on Friday 12 June 2015.

Demonetisation is a Necessity

Demonetisation is the act or process of removing the legal status of a currency unit. In our case the currency unit is the Z\$ that we are demonetising. Demonetisation is necessary whenever there is a change of national currency. The old unit of currency must be **retired** or **decommissioned**.

Zimbabwe adopted the multiple currency system or dollarization in 2009 and it is therefore necessary to demonetise the Z\$ unit to replace it with the multiple currency system as was approved in the Finance (No. 2) Act of 2009. The decommissioning of the Z\$ has therefore been pending and long outstanding since 2009.

Demonetisation is not compensation for the loss of value of the Z\$ due to hyper-inflation. It is an exchange process.

Demonetisation is an important and necessary process to align with best practice and, in the case of Zimbabwe, to comply with the multiple currency system. We cannot have two legal currency systems.

We need therefore to safeguard the integrity of the multiple currency system or dollarization in Zimbabwe. Demonetisation is therefore critical for policy consistency and for enhancing consumer and business confidence.

Multiple Currency System

This policy intervention is necessary to buttress Government's commitment to the multiple currency system. In the January 2015 Monetary Policy Statement, I alluded to

the conditions precedent before any change from the multicurrency system can be entertained. To avoid any doubts, I highlighted the need for the following conditions:

- i) Foreign exchange reserves equivalent to one year import cover;
- ii) Sustainable Government budget;
- iii) Low and stable interest rate environment;
- iv) Sustainable level of consumer and business confidence;
- v) Confidence in the financial sector; and
- vi) Creation of Job opportunities.

Demonetisation Window

The demonetisation process which will run from 15 June 2015 to 30 September 2015 will deal with all non-loan bank accounts as at 31st December 2008 as well as cash held by the public. Cash holders can exchange their holdings at any bank, building society, POSB and Zimpost.

All cash pay-outs under the demonetisation process shall be exempted from bank charges and Government tax, and would be disbursed on a “no questions” asked basis. The Bank has already discussed the payment modalities with the banks.

After 30 September 2015 bank notes that have not been exchanged shall be considered demonetised or decommissioned.

Bank Account Holders

Banks will pay the equivalent US\$ amount for each account balance as at 31 December 2008 converted as follows:

- a) Accounts with balances of Zero to Z\$175 quadrillion will be paid a flat US\$5.
- b) Accounts with balances above Z\$175 quadrillion will be paid the equivalent value after applying the UN exchange rate of US\$1/Z\$35 quadrillion or US\$1/Z\$35,000 (revalued).

The banking public should visit their banks to establish the balances which were in their accounts. We have interacted with the banks and they still have all the information, which we as the Reserve Bank also authenticated.

Walk-in Cash Customers

Banks will exchange ZW\$ cash for US\$ equivalent for walk-in cash customers at an exchange rate of Z\$250 trillion to US\$1 for 2008 note series and Z\$250 to US\$1 for 2009 note series.

Cash customers will get their exact US\$ equivalent of the converted amount, starting from US1 cent up to US\$50. Where the US\$ equivalence exceeds US\$50, payment will be made through their respective bank accounts. Corporate customers' US\$ equivalent will be credited into their respective bank accounts.

Banks will accept all notes, with or without value from customers on behalf of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe.

The following Tables highlight what each denomination will receive on conversion of their cash holdings.

2009 Note Series Denomination	Year of Issue	Conversion Rate	Value per piece (US\$)
500	2009	250	2.00
100	2009	250	0.40
50	2009	250	0.20
20	2009	250	0.08
10	2009	250	0.04
5	2009	250	0.02

2008 Note Series Denomination	Year of Issue	Conversion Rate	Value per piece (US\$)
100 trillion	2008	250 trillion	0.40
50 trillion	2008	250 trillion	0.2
20 trillion	2008	250 trillion	0.08
10 trillion	2008	250 trillion	0.04

n.b. *trillion* has 12 zeroes

Where an individual has denominations which are not highlighted here and they amalgamate to give value banks will pay the equivalent.

I Thank You.

DR J P Mangudya
Governor
Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe

11 June 2015

NI

Book News and Reviews

At last a comprehensive catalog of the coins of Palembang. This sultanate on the Island of Sumatra (Dutch East Indies, today Indonesia) issued coins until 1821; nearly all lead-tin, uniface, mostly inscribed in Arabic. Previous references gave them only sketchy (and inaccurate) coverage, with two nineteenth century works each illustrating fewer than 30 varieties.

Franks S. Robinson has compiled a little book, with background information, properly cataloging 291 distinct numbered varieties, all with clear enlarged photographs, plus rarity ratings on a ten-point scale. The work is the culmination of a project intensively analyzing 35,000 Palembang coins.

Contact the author for price and shipping: Frank S. Robinson, Box 8600, Albany, NY 12208. Tel: 518-482-2639. Email: frank@fsrcoin.com.

NI

Selections from the Gasvoda Collection - Part I
Coins of the Imperial Period and the Twelve Caesars
 Numismatica Ars Classica (NAC)

Cn. Pompeius Magnus and Terentius Varro: Denarius



Cn. Pompeius Magnus and Terentius Varro. Denarius, mint moving with Pompey on Illyrian coast, Dyrrachium or a camp mint near Dyrrachium in 49, AR 3.89 g. VARRO·PRO·[Q] Bust of Jupiter facing r. wearing diadem. Rev. Sceptre between dolphin l. and eagle r., in exergue, MAGN·PRO / COS. Babelon Terentia 15 and Pompeia 7. C 3. Sydenham 1033 var. Sear Imperators 8. Woytek Arma et Nummi p. 558. RBW –. Crawford 447/1a.

Very rare and probably the finest specimen known. A superb portrait struck in high relief and with an enchanting light iridescent tone, virtually as struck and FDC Ex NAC sale 40, 2007, 529 and Nomos fixed price list 2008, 71.

When Julius Caesar and his armies defied orders from the senate and marched on Rome, Pompey, who was without troops in accordance with Roman law, was forced to flee. Many leading senators and the consuls fled with him. As they departed for Greece a call was put out to amass what troops could be found to try and sustain a response to Caesar's bold confrontation. Deprived of the Rome mint, the Pompeian leaders were forced to use moving mint facilities to generate enough coinage to sustain their response. This coinage, which likely was supplemented by what money could be removed from Rome during the hasty flight, was needed for everything to support Pompey's legions—food, arms, housing, transportation, etc. Given how large the production of such coinage must have been, surprisingly little of it survives today. The bulk of the coinage was likely melted and re-coined by Caesar.

The present coin type is one of only a couple of issues which seem to have been minted directly under, and in the name of, Pompey. The obverse bust relates to the powers bestowed upon him by the Roman senate granting him exceptional control over almost the entire Roman Empire. The reverse glorifies Pompey's military victories, notably against Mithradates VI, of Pontus, and against piracy in the Mediterranean. MSG.

The Gasvoda Collection - Part I, Coins of the Imperial Period and the Twelve Caesars. Numismatica Ars Classica Auction 86, 8 October 2015, lot 4.

Sextus Pompeius and Q. Nasidius / Galley: Denarius



Sextus Pompeius and Q. Nasidius. Denarius, mint moving with Sextus Pompey in Sicily in 44-43 or 42-38, AR 3.81 g. NEPTVNI Bare head of Cn. Pompeius Magnus r.; before, trident and below, dolphin. Rev. Galley r. with billowing sail and bank of rowers moving; in upper l. field, star. In exergue, NASIDIVS. Babelon Pompeia 28 and Nasidia 1. C 20. Sydenham 1350. Sear Imperators 235. Woytek Arma et Nummi p. 558. RBW 1698. Crawford 483/2. Rare and exceptionally well-centred for the issue. Struck on excellent metal and with a light iridescent tone. An insignificant area of weakness on obverse, otherwise good extremely fine Ex Triton sale XIII, 2010, 290 (expertly conserved since).

Sextus Pompey managed to escape the defeat of the Pompeian forces at Munda and was deemed too insignificant for Caesar to expend the effort to track him down. He spent time in hiding until Caesar departed back to Rome. He then started recruiting the remnants of the Pompeian legions who had survived Munda. In this effort he managed to eventually control all of further Spain. He also managed to amass a rather large fleet and eventually moved both his troops and ships to Massillia. In the meantime, Caesar had been assassinated, and the senate had bestowed upon Sextus the title Command in Chief of the Fleet and of the Sea Coasts. This coin obviously declares Sextus' mastery of the seas. The portrait of Pompey the Great which appears on the obverse is far superior in style to preceding issues. This would prove to be one of the best images of Pompey found on coinage. MSG.

The Gasvoda Collection - Part I, Coins of the Imperial Period and the Twelve Caesars. Numismatica Ars Classica Auction 86, 8 October 2015, lot 15.

Sextus Pompeius and Q. Nasidius / Multiple Galleys: Denarius



Sextus Pompeius and Q. Nasidius. Denarius, mint moving with Sextus Pompey in Sicily in 44-43 or 42-38, AR 3.80 g. NEPTVNI Bare head of Cn. Pompeius Magnus l.; before, trident and below, dolphin. Rev. Four galleys without sails about to engage in combat, two moving r., two moving l.; below, Q. NASIDIVS. Babelon Pompeia 30 and Nasidia 21. C 21. Sydenham 1351. Sear Imperators 236. Woytek *Arma et Nummi* pl. 11, 282. RBW –. Crawford 483/1. Of the highest rarity, only the sixth specimen known and the only one in private hands. Among the rarest issues of the whole Republican series and missing in all private collections. A bold portrait struck on a very large flan, slightly off-centre on reverse, otherwise about extremely fine Ex NAC sale 59, 2011, 839.

This denarius of Sextus Pompey is an extremely rare adjunct to a relatively large issue of Q. Nasidius that has on its reverse a single galley rather than the collection of vessels shown here in the midst of battle. Identifying the mint and vintage of the issues of Q. Nasidius has been a topic of debate among scholars.

The refined style suggests that they were struck somewhere other than Spain if the crudely rendered Spanish-mint denarii of the Pompeians are taken into account. Sydenham and Grueber both suggested Sicily, Crawford considers them struck at a moving mint with Sextus Pompey while en route to Sicily, and Sear has suggested Massalia.

Opinions on dating are likewise varied, with 38-36 B.C. offered by Sydenham and Grueber, and 44-43 favoured by Crawford and Sear. An early date does seem preferable since the coinage does not bear the lofty title 'Commander-in-chief of the Fleet and of the Sea Coasts' that he received from the senate in April of 43 B.C.

Nasidius had long been loyal to the Pompeians. In 49 B.C. he attempted to break the siege of Massalia by Julius Caesar's legate Decimus Brutus. Afterward he held a command in the Pompeian fleet in North Africa and then joined the forces that Pompey Junior had assembled in Spain after the Battle of Thapsus. Clearly, as these coins show, he sailed with Sextus Pompey afterward, only to eventually join Marc Antony as an admiral in his eastern fleet. He participated in the disaster at Actium, after which nothing further is known of his life or career.

The Gasvoda Collection - Part I, Coins of the Imperial Period and the Twelve Caesars. Numismatica Ars Classica Auction 86, 8 October 2015, lot 16.

Sextus Pompeius: Aureus



Sextus Pompeius. Aureus, Sicily 37-36, AV 8.13 g. MAG·PIVS – IMP·ITER Bearded and bare head of Sextus Pompeius r.; all within oak wreath. Rev. [PRAEF] Heads of Cn. Pompeius Magnus on l., and Cn. Pompeius Junior on r., facing each other; at sides, lituus and tripod. Below, CLAS·ET·ORAE / MARIT·EX·S·C. C 1. Babelon Pompeia 24. Bahrfeldt 87. Sear Imperators 332. Kent-Hirmer pl. 28, 102 (obverse) and pl. 27, 102 (reverse). Woytek *Arma et Nummi* p. 559. RBW 1783. Crawford 511/1. Calicó 71. Very rare. An appealing specimen with three handsome portraits, reverse slightly off-centre and an insignificant area of weakness on Pompeius Junior's head, otherwise extremely fine Ex *Ars Classica* XVII, 1934, 680; Stack's 29 November 1990, John Whitney Walter, 12; Stack's 3 December 1996, Michel. F. Price, 96 (illustrated on the cover page); NAC 45, Barry Feirstein IV, 2008, 4 and NAC 62, 2011, S.C. Markoff, 2006 sales.

Sextus Pompey was the first Roman to use dynastic imagery on coinage. This crucial step was taken in an age when the senate and traditions were losing ground to the cult of personality. The careers of the recent warlords Marius, Sulla, Crassus, Caesar, and Sextus' own father, Pompey Magnus, had benefited disproportionately from the strength of their charisma. In 42 B.C., when aurei of portrait type originally were struck, Antony, Octavian, Lepidus, Brutus, Cassius, and Sextus Pompey all were fighting for supremacy. Thus, this issue sets an enormously important precedent with Sextus honouring his family in so complete a manner. He and his brother Gnaeus earlier had initiated that practice by portraying their deceased father on denarii as early as 45-44 B.C., but here Sextus takes it a step further by portraying himself with his deceased brother and father. The issue amounts to an exhibition of his pedigree, as well as a nostalgic call to arms for all who had thus far served the Pompeian cause. Both Antony and Octavian made use of the coinage to advertise their relationship with the murdered Julius Caesar, a publicity war that was won by Caesar's nephew and heir, Octavian. But Antony took the practice to a level even beyond Sextus Pompey by representing living relatives on his coinage. Lacking a pedigree that was comparable with Octavian or Sextus Pompey, Antony pursued the next-best option by promoting his active dynasty, for the coins bore portraits of his brother, his son, and perhaps three of his four wives. On this aureus we find the only coin portrait of Sextus Pompey; it is shown within an oak wreath, traditionally an award for those who had saved the life of a Roman citizen,

which must relate to the many lives he saved by taking in political refugees who escaped the Caesarean proscriptions. On the reverse the portraits of Pompey Magnus and Gnaeus Pompey are flanked by priestly objects, a lituus and a tripod, which represent the priesthoods to which they had been appointed.

Ultimately the efforts of Sextus would fail. He achieved a brief peace with Antony and Octavian in 39 BC but Octavian, led by his trusted friend Agrippa, was able to drive Sextus out of Sicily and end his piracy. Sextus was captured at Miletus in 35 BC and, without trial, executed.

The Gasvoda Collection - Part I, Coins of the Imperial Period and the Twelve Caesars. Numismatica Ars Classica Auction 86, 8 October 2015, lot 31.

Sextus Pompeius: Denarius



Sextus Pompeius. Denarius, Sicily 37-36, AR 3.74 g. MAG PIVS·IMP·ITER Head of Cn. Pompeius Magnus r.; behind, jug and before, lituus. Rev. PRÆF Neptune standing l., foot on prow, between the brothers Anapias and Amphinomus, with their parents on their shoulders; in exergue, CLAS·ET·ORÆ / [MAR]IT·EX·S·C. Babelon Pompeia 27. C 17. Sydenham 1344. Sear Imperators 334. Woytek, *Arma et Nummi* p. 558. RBW 1785. Crawford 511/3a. Rare. A wonderful portrait of fine style struck on a very broad flan, light old cabinet tone and extremely fine Ex Lanz sale 88, 1998, Benz, 749.

The Gasvoda Collection - Part I, Coins of the Imperial Period and the Twelve Caesars. Numismatica Ars Classica Auction 86, 8 October 2015, lot 32.

NI

Marie-José of Belgium and the Gold Medal of the Order of Malta

Herman Blanton, NI #LM115

Princess Marie-José of Belgium (1906-2001) was born to King of the Belgians, Albert I and the Duchess Elisabeth of Bavaria. During the Great War (WWI) she was sent to England for safety. In 1930 she married the Italian Prince Umberto II, son of King Victor Emmanuel III and Queen Elena. Upon her marriage Marie-José became *Principessa di Piemonte* (Princess of Piedmont) in the House of Savoy. She lived and reigned in the turbulent first half of the twentieth century including WWI as a child, the rise of fascism in her adopted country and WWII after which she became Queen of Italy from May 9, 1946 until June 2, 1946 when the monarchy was abolished by referendum; Marie José was therefore the last Queen of Italy. The second half of her life was spent in exile, mostly in Switzerland.



In my research for this article it became very clear that politics has corrupted the truth about the princess. Rather than sort this out I chose instead to limit this article to her nursing activity and even only some of that. She experienced nursing early when as a child she returned to Belgium for some of her school breaks during WWI. Her mother allowed Marie-José to wear nurse dress and help at the military hospital “Hôpital de l’Océan” in La Panne.

For instance, during the final Allied offensive, in 1918, the 12-year-old princess prepared bandages for the surgeons. She would later recall these experiences, in poignant terms: *At the Océan, the atmosphere was truly heavy, there were screams of pain on all sides. Yet I did not feel horror, I was convinced that I was making myself useful, in some way, to my country. There was, however, a particularly difficult day. I was looking, in vain... for a wounded man in serious condition to whom, for a week, I had been bringing a bit of broth. His bed was empty. Another patient, who was lying nearby, warned me: “Your Highness, he is gone. He is dead. May I have his ration?” The cruel reality behind his question made me lose control of myself and I had to rush off, barely holding back my tears.* (Recorded by Luciano Regolo in *La Regina Incompresa, tutto il racconto della vita di Maria José di Savoia*.) <http://crossoflaeken.blogspot.com/2009/03/wartime-childhood.html>.

In 1927 Marie-José joined the International Red Cross. Soon after her marriage in 1930 she practiced nursing by visiting and caring for the poor. When she and Umberto moved to Naples in 1931 she volunteered at the Hospital for Incurables.

The event leading to the subject gold medal is the Ethiopian (or African) Campaign and the part that the Princess of Piedmont played in it. The princess took the name Sister Maria di Piemonte and traveled throughout Italy working in hospitals. Wanting to go to Africa as a nurse she completed the required Red Cross training at the Hospital for Tropical Diseases, passed her exams and very shortly thereafter departed for Africa. On March 14, 1936 she boarded the hospital ship *Cesarea*, which sailed out of the port of Naples. The princess was accompanied by the delegate general of the Red Cross Irene Giunti, inspector Emma Mazzolari, Elda Bellina, Sofia Bossi Pucci, Laura Castiglione, Maria De Sanna, Raffaella Fera and Ina Moretti. All operated under the orders of leader Elizabeth Ciso of Torrecuso (Petacco 2012). Maria José devoted herself actively assisting the sick and wounded at Asmara Eritrea, Äkurdät, Bender Kassin, Otumulo, Chisamaio, Mogadisho and on board the *Cesarea* (Hall 2014). Incidentally, Princess Marie-José herself became president of the Italian Red Cross in 1939.



S. A. R. LA PRINCIPESSA DI PIEMONTE A BORDO DELLA NAVE CESAREA

This is a group photo of Red Cross nurses aboard the hospital ship *Cesarea*. In this picture the princess is seated on the end, looking into the camera.



Princess Marie-José on the arm of her husband Prince Umberto upon her return to Italy from Africa.

For her work as an active nurse the princess received the subject medal from *The Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta* (known by various names such as the Knights of Malta). I contacted the Order and received the email reply below confirming that this medal was awarded to Marie José, Princess of Piedmont.

Jul 20 at 3:15 AM

Herman Blanton

Egregio Sig. Blanton,

in riferimento alla Sua richiesta, La informo che si tratta della Medaglia d'Oro con cui l'Ordine di Malta onorò i meriti della Principessa del Piemonte e rese omaggio all'esempio di pietà e di carità da lei stessa offerto durante la campagna d'Africa del 1936 in cui ella si recò nelle colonie della Somalia e dell'Eritrea a bordo della nave ospedale "Cesarea".

Cordialmente,

Valeria Maria Leonardi

Archivista, Bibliotecaria e Diplomatista

Conservatoria Magistrale

Sovrano Militare Ordine Ospedaliero

di San Giovanni di Gerusalemme di Rodi e di Malta

Palazzo Magistrale

Via dei Condotti 68 - I 00187 Roma

Tel: +39-06-67581-281

Fax +39-06-67581-204

www.orderofmalta.int

Translation: "In reference to your request, I inform you that it is the Gold Medal of the Order of Malta in which it (the Order) honored the merits of the Princess of Piedmont and paid tribute to the example of piety and charity that she herself offered during the 1936 Africa Campaign when she traveled to the colony of Somalia and Eritrea aboard the hospital ship "Cesarea."



The medal measures 16 mm diameter and has suspension loop and ribbon as made. The overall length of the order is 40 mm. The face of the medal has a crowned Maltese Cross and surrounded by the legend “SOVRANO ORDINE MILITARE DI MALTA•” [Sovereign Military Order of Malta]. The back has two branches with the legend outside “PATRIA CARITA” [Homeland Charity] and within a rhombus the mark 750 (which appears to be the gold fineness). Engraved within the branches “S.A.R. MARIA PRINCIPESSA DI PIEMONTE”. S.A.R. is the abbreviation for *Sua Altezza Reale* [Her Royal Highness Maria Princess of Piedmont].

References:

- Hall, Coryne. 2014. *Princesses on the Wards: Royal Women in Nursing through Wars and Revolutions*. The History Press. Especially chapter 10 “From Italy to Ethiopia”.
- Petacco, Arrigo. 2012. *Regina*. Edizioni Mondadori.

Images:

Image of Queen Marie-José from Wikipedia:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marie_Jos%C3%A9_of_Belgium#/media/File:Marie-Jos%C3%A9_of_Belgium2.jpg

Images of the princess in nursing dress from the website of U.S. National Library of Medicine <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/>

NI

The Big “Little” Mystery: *Mitades* **Herman Blanton, NI # LM115**

A “*mitad*” is half the value of a *cuartillo*. The royal ordinances for Santa Fé neither define nor authorize the *mitad*.

... ordenó que en Santa Fe, del Nuevo Reino de Granada, se redujera la plata corriente a moneda acendrada de ley de once dineros y cuatro granos de fino, en reales de ocho, cuatro, dos, sencillos, y cuartillos, en la talla de 67 reales por marco, y, el oro se acuñara en escudos y doblones, a la ley de 22 quilates. (... ordered in Santa Fé, New Kingdom of Granada, to convert the plata corriente into coins refined to eleven dineros and four granos in eight reales, four, two, single, and cuartillos at the rate of 67 per mark, and the gold strike into escudos and doubloons of 22 carats.) (Barriga I: 26). This citation does not mention *medios* (1/2 real) or *mitades* (1/8 real).

En el tiempo en que fueron Tesoreros, sus ayudantes, Iñigo de Alvis y Martín de Arbustante, se acuñaron piezas de plata (recortada), en reales de ocho, de cuatro, de dos, reales sencillos, cuartillos y mitades. (During the era of [mint] Treasurers, their assistants, Iñigo de Alvis and Martin Arbustante, struck silver pieces (cut “cobs”) in eight reales, four, two, one reales, cuartillos and *mitades*. (Barriga I: 43) Notice the order of decreasing value and *medios* (1/2 real) are omitted.

However, in the history of the mint there were demands for low value coins such as recorded in Barriga I: 104-105.

Hacia el año de 1690 llegó la falta de moneda fraccionara a hacerse tan grave, que ocasionó varias revueltas no solo en el capital sino en el todo el Nuevo Reino. Por este hecho el Gobernador y Capitán General del Nuevo Reino, don Diego de Villaba y Toledo, ordenó al Tesorero la conversión inmediata de las barras de plata fina, que existían en ese momento en todas las Caxas Reales en moneda pequeña, exclusivamente cuartillos y pocos reales...que los pobres y Religiones y Cofradías no recojen las limosnas ordinarias por falta de ellas...Mandava y Mando, que se repartan los dichos quartillos y medios reales....

... By the year 1690 the lack of coins became so serious that several revolts occurred not only in the capital but throughout Nuevo Reino. By this fact the Governor and Captain General of the New Kingdom, Don Diego de Villalba y Toledo, ordered the immediate conversion of fine silver bars that existed at that time in all the Royal Treasuries into small coin, exclusively cuartillos and a few reales...because the poor and “charities” were unable to gather alms due to the lack of them...rule and order to distribute the cuartillos and *medios* (1/2 reales)....

The above citation does not specifically mention *mitades* but it does give the reason Santa Fé produced cuartillos whereas it seems in general that cuartillo production in America ceased elsewhere.

According to Barriga *mitades* were produced since the initial year of the Santa Fé mint, 1627, and he recorded specific production as late as a century later, 1726.

In volume I page 139 Barriga provided a monetary table which included the *mitad*. Note that in the table he must have intended 1/64 of a peso (8R).

SISTEMA MONETARIO

1627 — 1756

Moneda de oro

Denominación	Peso grms.	Ley	Valor
Escudo de ocho.....	27,0584	22 quilates	\$ 16
Doblón (escudo de dos)	6,7646	22 quilates	\$ 4
Escudo	3,3823	22 quilates	\$ 2

Moneda de plata

Peso (patacón)	27,4624	11 dineros 4 granos	\$ 1 (8 reales)
Real	3,4326	11 dineros 4 granos	$\frac{1}{8}$ de real
Cuartillo	0,8582	11 dineros 4 granos	$\frac{1}{32}$ de real
Mitad	0,4291	11 dineros 4 granos	$\frac{1}{64}$ de real

Table

Barriga I: 43 “*En el tiempo en que fueron Tesoreros, sus ayudantes, Iñigo de Alvis y Martín de Arbustante, se acuñaron piezas de plata (recortada), en reales de ocho, de cuatro, de dos, reales sencillos, cuartillos y mitades. En oro, solamente escudos y doblones, según ordenanza.*”

Barriga III: 532 “*Los primeros cuartillos y mitades acunados se emitieron el día 4 de diciembre de 1627.*” But on the same page he listed 1/4 real but not 1/8 real (*mitad*).

Barriga III: 537 Barriga shows for the year 1726 that 56 marks of silver were struck into cuartillos and *mitades*.

What are the mitades that Barriga mentions?

I favor the possibility that the *mitades* are light-weight planchets struck with cuartillo dies, however, until today no mitades have been identified. By fortuitous happenstance Alexander Montaña contacted me with images of recently discovered cuartillos only days before this paper was scheduled for release. With the images Alex supplied I am now willing to propose that *mitades* were indeed made in 1726. And even further than that to propose how they were made and to illustrate examples.

A comment about mass. In the table above Barriga has the weight of the cuartillo as 0.8582 gram but in volume I: 30 he justifies the mass of the mark as 230.1232 grams which makes the cuartillo 0.8587 gram. In my writings thus far I have used 230.1232 grams and will so here. The discrepancy is small but the importance of referencing Table 6 is to show that Barriga documented *mitades*.

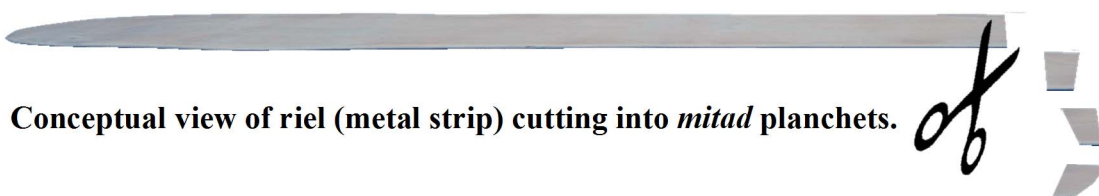
Hypothesis to attribute and date the mitades of 1726

The *mitad* is an enigmatic coin and even though Barriga mentions it multiple times it has so far never been identified. The production data (quantity struck) in Barriga does not correlate precisely with the coins confirmed today, but even so, Barriga must have been faithful to the records he had. It seems the production he recorded in mint reports is for coins produced since the previous report, not necessarily a calendar year. For

1725 Barriga records 8 reales and 4 reales (we confirm the two-reales denomination for 1725) and for 1726 he records cuartillos and *mitades* (we confirm medios dated 1726). We can interpret from Barriga that the larger silver denominations are recorded as 1725 and the smaller silver denominations for 1726. Therefore, it is a reasonable assumption (not proven) that the smaller silver coins were made in 1726: medio (half-real), cuartillo (quarter-real), *mitad* (eighth real) and maybe the one-real but none are known. I hope to write more on this later.



0.80 gram, 11 mm	0.6 gram, 11 x 8 mm	0.55 gram, 10.6 x 8 mm
Morton & Eden (Huntington Collection) Sale 61 lot 224 6-March-2013	Daniel Frank Sedwick Treasure Auction 12 Lot 1195 25/26-October-2012	Alexander Montaña 2015
Proposed attributions:		
Cuartillo (c. 1726)		Mitades (c. 1726)



Mystery:

Barriga is definite concerning production of *mitades* in 1726. Are the rectangular shaped underweight “cuartillos” illustrated above indeed examples of the enigmatic mitad? I propose that these very same rectangular-shaped light-weight planchets struck with cuartillo dies are the Santa Fé *mitades* of 1726 recorded in Barriga III: 537.

Reference:

Barriga Villalba, A.M. 1969. *Historia de la Casa de Moneda*, 3 volumes. Bogotá: Banco de la Republica (de Colombia).

NI

Santa Fé Gold of Assayer Miguel Pinto Camargo
Herman Blanton, NI # LM115

The Santa Fé de Bogotá (in present day Colombia) mint officially opened 30 April 1627.

Libro de Estacio Sanguinol Rangel escrivano del Rey mio Senor y de su Real casa de moneda de la ciudad de Santa Fé del Nuevo Reyno de Granada de las yndias que se començo atrienda de Abril de mil y seiscientos y veinte y siete años siendo tesorero della el capitán Alonso turrillo de yebra en el que está la cuenta y razón de las entriegas de oro y plata que se labra en la dicha casa. (Barriga I: 45-46)

On pages 46-48 Barriga transcribed records of transactions for gold production in 1627 concluding with this summary.

Estos documentos prueben la época de la primera acuñación de oro en el Nuevo Reino y que Miguel Pinto Camargo era el ensayador, quien eligió como la letra P. según consta en un expediente que se siguió con motivo de la falta de ciento veinte pesos en la acuñación en el mes de diciembre de 1627. (Barriga I: 48)

In a summary table (I: 62) Barriga recorded gold production for 1627-37. For the year 1627 he listed 12 *marcos* / 4 *onzas* / 4 *ochavas* which calculates to 12.5625 *marcos*. At the specified 68 escudos per mark that is 854.25 escudos or 427.125 two-escudos (doubloons). We don't know the ratio of escudos to doubloons but the total mintage was very likely less than 500 pieces.

In 1936 the Banco de la República acquired more than 500 pieces of two-escudos from the *El Mesuno* treasure. In 1959 Leopoldo Cancio examined the *El Mesuno* treasure at the *Banco de la República (de Colombia)* and estimated there were 375-400 pieces, all two escudo and no one escudo; he did not encounter any dated 1627 (Cancio 1978: 39). He was allowed to purchase one coin for 50 USD which he did and it was a 1628 assayer P. The coin was valued at 6.91 USD which seems must have been the bullion content. See Cancio for prior research on Pinto gold (1978, 1979).

For identification compare the illustrated two-escudo specimens below, which are struck from the same dies. One escudo (3.384 g) should be similar to two escudo (6.768 g) but only half the weight and the value 1 instead of 2.



2 Escudos 1628 NRP with value as Arabic 2 (horizontal)
Restrepo 2012 p. 84: M50-5



2 Escudos 1628 NRP with value as Arabic 2 (horizontal)
***Gaceta Numismática* (Leopoldo Cancio) 52 Marzo 1979: 43**

Rarity of Assayer Pinto Gold at Santa Fé (1627-32)

ORO Y PLATA ACUÑADOS EN EL TIEMPO EN QUE FUERON TESOREROS, IÑIGO DE ALVIS Y MARTIN DE ARBUSTANTE						
RESUMEN POR AÑOS						
AÑO	Moneda de oro			Moneda de plata		
	Marcos	Onzas	Ochavas	Marcos	Onzas	Ochavas
1627.....	12	4	4	3096	0	5
1628.....	198	1	2	22765	4	4
1629.....	383	6	4	11669	6	6
1630.....	379	7	7	8686	3	1
1631.....	765	1	2	10295	0	2
1632.....	2102	5	4	7379	1	5
1633.....	1046	6	5	4705	7	5
1634.....	1284	4	6	4107	4	7
1635.....	1401	6	5	1282	0	5
1636.....	1605	7	0	1003	0	6
1637.....	2033	4	0	380	1	3
	<u>11214</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>75369</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
- 62 -						

Table 1
Barriga I: 62

On 29-March-1632 Alonso de Anuncibay replaced Miguel Pinto Camargo. This is about 1/4 year so we can estimate the portion of 1632 production under Pinto at 525.67 marks. The total gold under Pinto would then be 1739.67 marks. At least some of the production under Pinto bear the mark “A” as we know of two specimens of 2E dated 1628 with assayer mark “A” which we attribute to Anuncibay while he was apprenticed to Pinto. We know of two specimens of Pinto 1628 (Cancio and Restrepo 2012 M50-5).

From Barriga’s table it can be seen that from the start gold production was low and ramped up over the first five years (the Pinto years). However, we see the exact opposite with silver. The Pinto period saw high production of silver which validates the urgency to start the mint in 1627 in order to convert the *plata corriente* and *plata baja* into standard silver coin. Even though the silver production was “high” under Pinto when compared to gold it is well to consider that even the “high” silver numbers are small when compared to Potosí and México.

Marks of Silver Coined			
	Mexico	Potosi	Santa Fé
1627	395672	281658	3096
1628	439648	217762	22765
1629	381624	no data	11669
1630	578488	254406	8686
1631	472712	448123	10295
1632	no data	263600	7379
annual average	453629	293110	10648
ratio to Santa Fé	43:1	28:1	-

Table 2
1627-1632 (Source: *Las Cecas Indianas* pp. 251-52, 259, 263)

Conclusion? Pinto gold is rare to very rare. 1627 none known, 1628 two known.

Mystery:

Do any 1627 escudos or two-escudos exist today? All assayer Pinto (1627-32) gold is rare.

Reference:

- Barriga Villalba, A.M. 1969. *Historia de la Casa de Moneda*, 3 volumes. Bogotá: Banco de la Republica (de Colombia).
- Canció, Leopoldo. "El tesorero de El Mesuno corregido y aumentado" primera parte in *Gaceta Numismática* 51 Diciembre 1978: 32-40. Barcelona: Asociación Numismática Española.
- . "El tesorero de El Mesuno corregido y aumentado" segunda parte in *Gaceta Numismática* 52 Marzo 1979: 37-49. Barcelona: Asociación Numismática Española.
- Céspedes del Castillo, Guillermo. 1996 *Las Casas de Moneda en los Reinos de Indias. Vol. 1 : Las Cecas Indianas en 1536-1825*. Madrid.

NI

National Shooting Medal of Italy 1890
Harlan J. Berk, Ltd.



Italy, Roma. 1890. Medal (52 mm, 63.1 g). Commemorating a National Riflery Contest at Rome. By L. Pogliaghi and A. Cappucio. Head of Roma right, wearing winged and crested Corinthian helmet decorated with a personification of the river Tiber and the she-wolf suckling the twins Remus and Romulus; in exergue, ROMA MDCCCLXXX / TIRO A SEGNO NAZIONALE (national shooting), eagle standing facing on crossed rifles, head left, with wings spread and shield on breast; behind, rainbow below star; all within wreath. A. Comandini, "Medaglie Italiane del 1890," RIN V (1892), p. 228, 15. [Reprint with permission Harlan J. Berk, Ltd. 195th Buy or Bid Sale 29-Oct-2015 lot 577.]

In the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars the Austrian government moved to suppress nationalist movements in Italy including a ban on target shooting for most of their territories. With the nationalist movement towards Italian Unification shooting contests became more common. In 1863 the first national shooting competition was held in Turin with more to follow. By late 19th century Italy was taking its place as a world power and was militarizing itself. The Act of 2 July 1882, no. 883, instituted the *Tiro a segno nazionale* (TSN) [National Shooting]. In 1890 a large national competition was held in Rome and it proved more militaristic than sporting. The subject medal is from the 1890 event.—Ed. Source: the website *Treccani, La Cultura Italiana* under the subject *Enciclopedia/Tiro a segno*.

[http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/tiro-a-segno_\(Enciclopedia_dello_Sport\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/tiro-a-segno_(Enciclopedia_dello_Sport))

The cited reference by Alfredo Comandini is available on internet at:
https://it.wikisource.org/wiki/Medaglie_italiane_del_1890

NI

Karl Goetz Medal: Albert Leo Schlageter
Harlan J. Berk, Ltd.



Germany, Karl Goetz Medal, 1923, Albert Leo Schlageter; 1923, Execution of Albert Leo Schlageter, Cast Bronze Medal, 20 g., 36 mm, by Karl Goetz, 1923, a bust of Albert Leo Schlageter, "Glüh' heilige Flamme glüh' glüh' u. erlösche nie für's Vaterland" (Glow Holy Flame! Glow! Glow! Never Die Out for The Fatherland), rev., Schlageter standing before a French military firing squad, "Ermordet von den Franzosen!" (Murdered by the French). This smaller Bronze medal is seldom seen. Schlageter was a member of the German Freikorps (paramilitary units) that used sabotage to resist the post war French occupation of the Ruhr and Rhineland. He was executed by the French military on May 26, 1923. His death created an image of martyrdom around him, which was cultivated by German nationalist groups, in particular the Nazi's who named military units and a naval vessel after him. [Reprint with permission Harlan J. Berk, Ltd. 195th Buy or Bid Sale 29-Oct-2015 lot 565.]



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NRP_Sagres_\(1937\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NRP_Sagres_(1937))

[The namesake ship *Albert Leo Schlageter* survives to this day. Built originally in 1937 it was confiscated by the USA at the end of WWII. The US sold the ship to Brazil in 1948 who renamed it *Guanabara*. In 1961 the Portuguese Navy bought the ship from Brazil, renamed her *NRP Sagres* and still maintains the ship in active service.—Ed.]

NI

“Battle of Mohács” Commemorative Coin

(The Battle of Mohács was the subject in Robert Ronus’ article “Lajos II, the Last King of Independent Hungary” published in the *NI Bulletin* March/April 2015, Vol. 50 Nos. 3/4, pp. 48-57. Recently, the Hungarian National Bank has issued a commemorative coin for the battle and battlefield.)



The battlefield at Mohács, scene of one of the most tragic events in Hungarian history, has officially been a national memorial site since 2012. In recognition of the nation's heroes and the memorial site, the Magyar Nemzeti Bank issued a HUF 2,000 brass collector coin as the second part of the series "National Memorial Sites". It was designed by Virág Szabó, who depicted grave markers created by Pál Kő as memorial posts at the Mohács memorial site on the coin. The official symbol of the Mohács National Memorial is found on the back, too, along with the overall symbol of the National Memorial Sites in Hungary.

Coin specifications:

Theme: 2015 National Memorial Mohács

Denomination: 2000 (forint)

Material: Cu90Ni10

Issue limit: 5000 pcs

Diameter: 37 mm

Weight: 18.4 g

Information from Hungarian Mint Ltd. (<http://coins.hu>) owned by Magyar Nemzeti Bank (Hungarian National Bank).

NI

**“AR” or “RA” Monogram Counterstamps
of The Galapagos Islands**
Dale Seppa, NI #2757



Courtesy of Heritage Auctions ha.com
Weekly World Coin Auction #231243 (25-October-2012), lot 62061

The monogram counterstamps of the Galapagos Islands (Cuhaj: 290) tentatively attributed therein to Rogerio (AKA Rogelio) Alvarado Villamar were somewhat controversial when they first showed up in the U.S. about 1965. Later when the previously scarce counterstamps became more available they became more controversial. These counterstamps appear on Ecuadorian silver coins dated 1884 through 1916 as well as on a very few foreign silver coins.

Now, fifty years later, it seems to me that maybe 25 percent of informed collectors wouldn't buy one unless it was near the collectible value of the host coin. On the other hand, there are some collectors willing to pay high prices. However, almost everyone agrees that some do not appear to be done with the same punch as those that first appeared in the U.S. market. That perception precipitated the belief that some are “legitimate” and many are “fakes”. When some specialized, experienced numismatists cannot even agree if the monogram is “AR” attributed to Arthur Reed or “RA” attributed to Rogerio Alvarado, it becomes more complicated.



Background information

To the best of my knowledge the earliest published reference to the Galapagos counterstamp described as “AR” monogram was in an article by Dr. Alfredo Karger (55-57) entitled *La numismatica ecuatoriana*. He specifically describes the monogram as “AR” and also mentions an “R” counterstamp of which I have seen several examples over the decades. He also stated that there were some examples of the “AR” monogram counterstamp in the collection of the Banco Central del Ecuador in Guayaquil.

Mencionamos resellos en monedas que circulaban en el Ecuador. MAS tarde prohibió un Decreto legislativo, con fecha de 4 de agosto de 1888,

expresamente a los particulares, emitir señas, etc., etc. A pesar de esto, hay una serie, tal vez completa, de moneda ecuatoriana de los años 1884 hasta 1916, que tienen dos diferentes resellos. En el cuello del retrato del general Sucre hay una letra «R», en letra de imprenta, o un monograma, «AR», en letras inglesas. Sabemos que con estas monedas reselladas se pagó el sueldo a los presos de la colonia penitenciaria en las Islas Galápagos, quienes trabajaban allí en las haciendas particulares.

Hasta hoy, falta toda investigación sobre la cuantía de aquellas monedas reselladas; tampoco mencionan los grandes catálogos nada sobre el particular. Pero, con buena razón, hay unos ejemplares en la colección oficial del Banco Central en Guayaquil.

Melvin Hoyos in *La Moneda Ecuatoriana* states that *Previnoticiario*, a publication done by Banco la Previsora covering the 1940-1950 period made some mention of Galapagos counterstamps but the original issue that he had was borrowed from him over six years ago and never returned so no way to double check this.

The second published reference that I have found is in *Monedas en las Islas Galapagos* by Ramon Ramirez in *El Coleccionista Ecuatoriano* dated May of 1961. Strangely, while he describes the monogram as “AR” he attributes it to Rogelio Alvarado.

The third published reference to “AR” was in *Coins of Ecuador 1833 - 1969*, 1st. edition, by Dale Seppa, published in 1969. A photo of a coin described as an “AR” monogram on a One Sucre coin dated 1888 was included in the book.

The fourth published reference to “AR” was in *Coins of Ecuador*, 2nd. edition, by Dale Seppa and Michael Anderson, published in 1973 by Almanzar’s. Included in that publication are photos of four coins described as “AR” counterstamps. Those coins were quite probably sold by Almanzar so if anyone has copies of his lists prior to 1975 or so they may be able to find more information.

The counterstamp described as an “RA” monogram was published by Carlos Elizondo Jr. in both the 1st. (1968) and 2nd. (1971) editions of *Eight Reales and Pesos of the New World*.

So the earliest published information known to me described the counterstamp as “AR” and then later in the 1967-73 period it was a tossup as to how they were described. The “RA” description seems to have superseded the “AR” description about that time. I suspect it was after the legend of Rogerio (AKA Rogelio) Alvarado Villamar became widely circulated. I believe that legend was created to promote the “replica” counterstamps that appeared in the U.S. in the 1970s.

These counterstamps were not of high interest to me in the 60s and 70s because I did not have enough knowledge about them and was unsure of being able to resell them. Holland Wallace as editor of Yeoman’s *Modern World Coins* in about 1970 declined to include them for various reasons.

I was completely oblivious when they started appearing more frequently and I did not note that “RA” had replaced “AR” as the du jour description. Thanks to information provided by Hoyos I was made aware of the transformation of “AR” to “RA” and using information that he provided, along with some additional research, I hope to be able to clearly state the pros and cons for both descriptions.

As most readers are not familiar with the history of the entity known as *Ingenio Progreso* owned by Manuel Julian Cobos I will give a brief overview of the events leading up to the period when the counterstamps supposedly appeared.

Cobos came to the Galapagos quite early and eventually had a fairly large operation mostly based on sugar refining but also earning money with agricultural products, livestock and lime (calcium oxide—which was used to whiten the sugar produced in the refinery and also exported). He was not known to be kind to his work force; comprised of native-born islanders, convicts, shanghaied persons from various places and a few fugitives thrown in for good measure. The “money” that he used to pay the workers consisted of non-legal tokens and scrip redeemable only in his store at Progreso on Chatham island (today San Cristobal island). Cobos owned the only ships in the islands that made regular trips to the mainland; “relocation” was not an option for any of the “employees”.

After many years of alleged, egregious abuses a number of the workers revolted, killed Cobos and the Island Governor Leonardo Reyna on January 15, 1904, took control of a ship and left for the mainland (Latorre 29-38).

“AR” counterstamp theory

After the Territorial Chief was murdered the government appointed Juan J. Pino to assume authority in early February of 1904. He arrived at Chatham at the end of the month on the cruiser *Cotopaxi* along with Arthur Reed. One of his first acts was to prohibit the use of any money that was not legal tender, theoretically doing away with the tokens and scrip issued by Cobos. Regardless of his decree there is no way this could have happened overnight as many residents still had appreciable quantities of the Cobos “money” and it continued to circulate.

The Cobos heirs had sent Arthur (AKA Arturo) Reed as Administrator of Progreso and he arrived on the same ship as Pino. The signature on the 50 Centavos in the photo appears to be Reed’s. The only other example of the Cobos scrip known to me is for Un Sucre and clearly bears the signature of Manuel J. Cobos. It would seem that Reed found or brought from the mainland some unsigned scrip and just continued to issue it. If this is so, it would tend to negate the possibility of “AR” counterstamps issued by Reed.



50 Centavos



1 Sucre

Part of the reason for the use of tokens and scrip on the island was the overall shortage of coinage in Ecuador. In the early 20th century proprietary scrip and tokens were not uncommon on haciendas in Ecuador. It would have been advantageous for Reed to continue to follow common practice and use homemade money rather than tying up capital using legal tender. I am reasonably sure one of his pretexts was that it would prevent escapees from having legal tender to use after reaching the mainland.

Another weak aspect of the “AR” counterstamp theory is that Reed arrived as Administrator of Progreso in late February of 1904 and was replaced by Roberto Celati and Julio Plaza in 1905. (Plaza was replaced by Roberto Chavarria in October of 1908; I don’t know what happened to Celati.) Therefore, Reed was Administrator for a fairly short time and I doubt his “AR” punch, if it existed, would have been used after he left.

If Reed produced the “AR” counterstamped coinage it is strange that he would use his initials when the previous tokens and scrip of Manuel Julian Cobos all bore the owner’s name or initials. Reed was only a temporary administrator.

Latorre (2002) mentions that Reed continued to use the severe practices of Manuel Julian Cobos and belligerently refused to change his methods. The new Territorial Chief, Juan Pino, later made similar complaints; affirming that Reed continued the hostile regime of Cobos and refused to pay taxes. Pino, appointed in February of 1904, resigned his position in July of the same year. It is reasonable to assume one reason for his resignation was the intransigence of Reed who seemingly continued to do as he pleased until he was relieved in 1905.

Bognoly (1905, 1918) only mentions the dates when Reed was appointed/arrived and Latorre only mentions the year he was discharged. Except for these two references along with a few odd details no one would even know Reed had ever been at Progreso. There are very few references for a man who administered the largest entity in the islands and created his own “money” for a failing sugar refinery that he didn’t own.

Nevertheless, I believe that it is within the realm of possibility some coins may have been counterstamped with the “AR” monogram by or for Reed after February of 1904. I believe none would have been done later than 1914, because of the international currency problems associated with World War I. That would be true even if subsequent Administrators had continued to use a punch made for Reed. Silver coins were still issued in Ecuador as late as 1916 but I feel few of the later issues could have made it to the islands.

“Ra” counterstamp theory

For the counterstamp described as “RA”, the closest thing to “proof” is that in *La Moneda Ecuatoriana* Hoyos includes a transcript of an interview with Rogerio Alvarado Cobos, the son of Rogerio Alvarado Villamar, which substantiates the possibility that some existed. The son was 85 years old when he gave the interview in 1995 and I believe he was speaking about his recollections from 1922 when he was 12 years old. His responses are not very clear and I am not able to fully determine the facts but he does state that he actually saw some coins with the counterstamp. However, he also states that he never saw anyone actually counterstamping coins while he was at Progreso. An article by Latorre (2002) says that Alvarado had counterstamps on regular Sucre coins (“*solo tenian un anagrama RA en los sucres corrientes*”) but he neglected to give a citation for the statement so it might have come from the son’s 1995 interview leaving us with only one shaky source.

With only that to go all I can do is lay out a few facts coupled with some suppositions until more documentation is available. It is somewhat disconcerting that the principal evidence shown in the previous paragraph may not be as important as I first thought. That is because Hoyos has since come to believe that Alvarado’s son may have made some errors during his interview due to age, etc., and Hoyos now believes that the monogram is “AR” for Arturo Reed as opposed to being “RA” for Rogerio Alvarado.

Regardless of any positive claims for the “AR” counterstamps being done by Reed it is still within the realm of possibility that Alvarado did make or have made the “RA” counterstamps. But whether it was Reed or Alvarado as Administrator it is hard to believe either would spend time and money counterstamping coins with no tangible benefit. All I can do is recite a brief history of Rogerio Alvarado Villamar to see if it causes the reader to support the “RA” description.

According to his son, Alvarado was born in Daule about 1873 and opened an establishment in Guayaquil in 1902 with money given to him by his father. It was called La Olimpia and was located at Aguirre y Pichincha where the well known Briz Sanchez had a store for many years. Now in 2015 that site is occupied by a pharmacy called SanaSana.

This handsome, dashing, 35 year-old, man met the 18 year-old Josefina Cobos Baquerizo, heiress of Manuel Julian Cobos, at his store in 1908. Shortly thereafter, they were married. I believe she may have had some capital and possibly was receiving some money from the Administrators in charge of Progreso after the death of her father.

Alvarado took possession of Progreso in November of 1909 and in December he announced grand plans (*grandes proyectos*) for colonization. Further information on this might be found in *Diario El Tiempo*, Guayaquil, December 7, 1909. One problem with this is that in the interview with the son, Rogerio Alvarado Cobos in 1995 he says

his father did not go to the Galapagos until about 1912-1914. However, he was somewhere between one and four years old when his father first went to Galapagos so his recollection could be inaccurate. Some sources state that Alvarado never spent much time on the Galapagos so this might have caused some confusion for Alvarado's son, particularly after the passage of eighty years. Most available literature states Alvarado went in 1909 and the dates on the periodicals at the end of this document seem to indicate that is correct.

With the hope of revitalizing the sugar refinery he borrowed ten thousand Dollars in 1910 (which he never repaid). It is possible that he took some of that money in specie and had some coins counterstamped. An article in *Diario El Telegrafo*, Guayaquil, for November 7, 1912 might shed some light on his marriage, the store, etc. I am told that there was a financial crisis in Ecuador in 1910 which could have affected the fortunes of Alvarado in many ways but I have no details on this.

It is possible that either or both of the articles mentioned above have some clues about Alvarado's grandiose plans for Galapagos and possibly something about "his own money" in the form of the "RA" counterstamps on circulating, silver coins of Ecuador.

By 1912 he was at least 100,000 Sucres in the hole and in 1917 the sugar refinery ceased operations. In January of 1918 Manuel Augusto Cobos, Alvarado's brother-in-law, arrived after attending school in France for four years and they ran Progreso as partners. I doubt young Manuel would have wanted coins stamped with Alvarado's initials after he arrived on the island.

As with many currencies when World War I began, the Sucre became inconvertible making paper Sucres virtually worthless outside of the country, and the contained value of silver in the coins was probably worth more than the Sucre itself. In about 1920 silver spiked to over a dollar an ounce, and the Sucre (0.900 fine, 25 grams) coins probably disappeared from circulation, if they hadn't already done so in 1914-15 or earlier. In 1927 the paper Sucre was valued at about 48 cents U.S. although I also see reports of it being as low as 26 cents U.S. in 1926. The silver Sucres minted in 1928 were 5 grams of 0.720 fine silver and none of them has ever been reported with counterstamps.

During that period (1914-1927) most Ecuadorian silver coinage was probably withdrawn from circulation, hoarded or melted. This could include a large portion, possibly almost all, of any counterstamped coins that might have existed. The few that collectors had acquired would likely be nicest ones which could explain the fact that we see less of these counterstamps in lower grades. Obviously, this would have been equally true if the counterstamps were "AR" or "RA". (As an aside; I have never seen or heard of a base metal coin with the monogram.)

I have read a dozen first-person accounts of people who lived on or visited the Galapagos during the 1908-1940 period. Almost all mention the story of Manuel Julian Cobos. Often mentioned is Cobos' son Manuel Augusto Cobos but fewer mention Rogerio Alvarado and none of them mention counterstamps. This indicates to me the counterstamped coins, if they ever existed, probably disappeared prior to 1918 and that Alvarado was not on the island as much as Cobos.

By 1927 Alvarado owed at least 400,000 Sucres. Various court battles ensued which ultimately caused him to lose everything. Prior to her death on September 20th, 1933

his wife, Josefina Cobos Baquerizo de Alvarado, had left him, purportedly because he was a drunk. He died, reputedly broke, in Guayaquil on July 1, 1943. He is buried in a mausoleum in a cemetery in Guayaquil with his wife and father-in-law.

A one Sucre 1895 Lima with the “RA” counterstamp has been certified genuine XF45 by PCGS (29592583). There is also a counterstamped 2 Decimos 1895 PHILA certified by INS, as “Galapagos 2 Decimos 1884”. Other than these two coins I do not know of any other certified, counterstamped pieces from the Galapagos. With their modern equipment and extensive research materials either of these organizations could have known more about them than I do. However, with no more knowledge than I have, it seems strange that items of unknown provenance, lacking definitive documentation could be certified.

Legend of Rogelio

Some folks that did not carefully read the previous sections of this article may try to refute some of my assertions by citing “The Legend of Rogelio”. Firstly, it is almost certain that his name was “Rogerio” not “Rogelio”. The tentative proof is: His son was named “Rogerio” and his tomb in Guayaquil shows “Rogerio”. Hoyos also believes the name is “Rogerio” and neither of us have any idea where “Rogelio” came from. To the best of my knowledge “Rogelio” first appeared in what I am calling “The Legend of Rogelio”. The version shown below is very similar to what I remember from when I first saw it sometime in the 70s.

The Legend: *“El Gobernador de Guayaquil en 1883 concede autorización de Rogelio Alvarado Director de Colecturía de la Cárcel “Germania” para la introducción de monedas a las Islas Galápagos; un año después y sobre esa base legal circularán solamente en el Archipiélago monedas sucres con el resello del monograma en letras entrelazadas RA, correspondientes al nombre del responsable de la cárcel.”* (The Governor of Guayaquil conceded the authorization to Rogelio Alvarado Director of Collections of the Jail “Germania” for the introduction of coins to the Galapagos Islands; one year later and with that legal base there will circulate only in the Archipelago Sucre coins with a monogram counterstamp with the letters RA entwined, corresponding to the name of the jail’s responsible person.)

Remarks on the Legend of Rogelio

1. There was no such title as “*Gobernador de Guayaquil*” in 1883. There was a “*Gobernador de Guayas*” the province in which Guayaquil is located.
2. Rogerio Alvarado was eleven years old in 1883.
3. He did not arrive in the Galapagos until at least 1909.
4. “*Director de Colecturia*” (Director of Collections) does not seem to be a term used in early 20th century Ecuador nor prior to that.
5. I can find no mention of a “*Cárcel Germania*” (Germania Jail) in any records available to me. The convicts on Chatham lived wherever they could find a place although it is probable the owner of Progreso did provide some crude housing for at least some of the workers.
6. There was no “responsible person” for the jail because there was no jail other than a small building that Cobos occasionally used to incarcerate some of his

employees. There were some convicts working for the owner of Progreso, but many others also worked for him.

7. Until at least September 1904 the money typically used on the island, was the proprietary scrip and tokens issued by Progreso. The workers were paid with it and it was accepted in the Progreso store.

n.b. Debunking of the legend can in no way be taken as proof that Alvarado did not issue the “R.A.” counterstamps. It is a debunking of the legend not debunking the possible issue of the counterstamps in question. There are examples known where some sellers have quoted a demonstrably false legend to promote the sale of legitimate items.

Conclusion

While I will add a couple of observations below, the fact is that Holland Wallace pretty well summed it up when he wrote *“There are some numismatic items whose status will never be definitively resolved. There is doubt about them for one reason or another, and the necessary information has been lost. The information definitely existed at the time the items were made; the makers certainly knew if they were legitimate or not. But diligent searching failed to find this information (i.e., a provable history), thus it is no longer possible to answer whatever doubts have come up.”*

After a hundred or more hours of research the motive for the Galapagos counterstamps continues to elude me. I am unable to perceive any practical use or fiscal advantage for counterstamped coins at Progreso. It would have been cheaper and easier for Reed and/or Alvarado to continue to use the scrip and tokens for as long as possible. The cost was negligible and additional profits would be accrued if any of the items were lost or destroyed. When forced to use legal coins it would have been easier to just use the legal coins as opposed to sending someone out to the woodshed to counterstamp coins on payday.

If Reed, did make or have made, the “AR” counterstamps it would be strange that he followed Pino’s decree about money when he didn’t do anything else Pino told him to do. We also have the probable evidence of the scrip apparently signed by Reed which would tend to nullify any possible reason to spend real money when he could print as much as he needed.

If Alvarado did make, or have made, the “RA” counterstamps I believe it was a very limited issue possibly believing it would be good propaganda for his colonization pipe dreams. If this conjecture is true then Alvarado would probably have made a very small quantity which would explain the scarcity of original “RA” counterstamps.

One interesting thing mentioned to me by Wallace is that of the examples he has seen there were none with significant signs of circulation after being thus stamped. By this he means one with wear on the opposite side from the punchmark; on the flattened area left by the stamping. I have not closely examined enough specimens to comment on this statement, but it would be interesting if owners of these counterstamps would examine them closely to see if this holds true with other specimens.

At the end of this brief review, preceded by countless hours of research, I almost agree with Wallace’s speculation that no “originals” exist. However, I still recognize a possibility that legitimate examples exist. Although the interview with the son of Rogerio Alvarado is demonstrably flawed in some respects I have difficulty branding as a lie his statement that he actually held some of the counterstamped coins in his own

hands at some time in the 1922-1930 period. There is also the unverified mention in *La Previnoticiario* 1940-50 to be taken into consideration.

Occurrences (or lack thereof)

A dedicated, numismatic bibliophile kindly did a review of many older references. He started with the Christensen, Coin Galleries and Schulman catalogs, as well as many FPLs (fixed price list) issued starting in the 1940s through to the end of the 1950s without encountering any of the “AR” or “RA” counterstamps. Rather surprising there was nothing in Schulman’s offerings and not because he didn’t handle any counterstamped Latin American coins. He came into a large consignment of counterstamps which were auctioned in April 1953 but they were largely West Indies items on various Spanish Colonial coins. Another good possibility was Stack’s prior to the Coin Galleries series. Adams also rates a dozen or so Stack’s sales in the 1940s and 1950s as having “Americas” content. However, there was nothing there nor in a few of the 1930s Stack’s sales. Stack’s issued about 60 fixed price lists during this same period and he was able to check about two-thirds of them without any luck.

Wayte Raymond was an interesting possibility as he was a very knowledgeable dealer, catering to an upscale clientele and handled some important items. His auctions during the 1930s, 1940s and early 1950s were conducted under his name or under the J. C. Morganthau label; all of both series were checked without results. He also issued fixed price lists under the *Coin and Medal Bulletin* title and then *Coin Topics*. Nothing there either. Bolender and Bluestone also had nothing.

Our bibliophile also notes that Almanzar, Peters and other possibilities didn’t start issuing catalogs until after 1960. These, particularly Almanzar, must be searched if anyone has them. Many small dealers of this period also issued lists so the possibilities border on the infinite.

Other possible sources such as Burzio’s Dictionary of Latin American Numismatics have been checked without result although Brunk did have them listed in his 1976 edition. The Guttag collection cataloged by Edgar Adams in two separate editions and sold at auction by Kosoff over a series of sales in the early 1940s drew a blank; not found in the Ecuador section nor in the unidentified counterstamp section of either edition. A few of the later Kosoff sales are rated as containing “Americas” material but nothing there either.

If these counterstamps were offered for sale in the 1940s, 1950s or even the 1960s, it was not via the “usual suspects” but rather through a more unusual venue or face-to-face transactions. One must however take into account that prior to the increased interest in Latin American coins, starting roughly in the 70s and 80s, any occurrences might have been in lots casually described something like “twelve Latin American coins with various counterstamps”.

A first-person report or a listing in any book, article, FPL or auction catalog dated prior to 1960 or so would go a long way toward proving that legitimate examples exist.

Suggested reading

To establish a timeline as well as many other details it was necessary to read *Manuel J. Cobos - Su Vida Y Su Obra* by Dr. Octavio Latorre Tapia.

A valuable work for background information is *Islas Encantadas* (1905 and 1918) by José Bognoly and Moises Espinosa which gives information about the tokens and scrip used by Manuel Julian Cobos prior to his death as well as some important information for several months after his death. The 1905 edition of Bognoly was updated in 1918 with two additional sections and I was fortunate enough to obtain copies of those two sections. Alvarado and Cobos are casually mentioned a couple of times in the additional sections but no information about monetary instruments of any kind was included. For those that don't read Spanish there is a translated condensation of the sections referring to the issues of Cobos entitled "Numismatic issues reflect history of plantation on the Galapagos Islands", in *World Coin News*, Vol. 17, no. 26 (Dec. 24, 1990).

The book by Bognoly and Espinosa is a very valuable resource. Latorre says they visited the island, however, I have the impression that it was written based on newspaper accounts. I am not certain if those accounts were completely accurate and/or comprehensive. It has been decades since I read the entire book and for this article I only perused the parts that appeared to be pertinent. Their Spanish seems a bit archaic and quite "flowery" and I think any non-native speaker might get a bit confused at some points. Copies are usually available for under a hundred dollars and anyone interested in the Galapagos and completely fluent in Spanish would find it of great interest.

The following publications are needed to further the study of these counterstamped issues. They appear to be unavailable but I list them in case someone can gain access to them. Any periodical from Guayaquil, Daule or any city in the province of Guayas during the 1902-1930 period could have information on Arthur (AKA Arturo) Reed, Rogerio (AKA Rogelio) Alvarado, Progreso, or La Olimpia, the store Alvarado supposedly owned from about 1902 to 1908. Without an intensive search by a Spanish speaking person with time and money it is unlikely they will ever be found.

Diario el Tiempo, febrero 24 de 1904, p. 2

Diario el Telégrafo, Guayaquil, 26 de febrero de 1906, sec. 1, p. 2

Diario El Telégrafo, Guayaquil, 12 de marzo de 1904, p. 2

Publicación Ocasional *El Colono*, Guayaquil, 1904

Diario El Telégrafo, Guayaquil, 12 de marzo de 1904, p. 2

Diario El Tiempo, Quito, marzo 23 de 1904, p. 2

Diario El Tiempo, Quito, marzo 24 de 1904

Diario el Telégrafo, Guayaquil, 26 de febrero de 1906, sec. 1, p. 2

Informe del Jefe Territorial Pedro Jaramillo, Registro Oficial, N. 294, febrero 4 de 1907, p. 208

Diario El Tiempo, Guayaquil, diciembre 7 de 1909, p. 1

Diario El Telégrafo, Guayaquil, noviembre 7 de 1912, p. 2

Diario El Comercio, Guayaquil, various dates

Mi explicación sobre la Sociedad Nacional Galápagos by Lorenzo Tous (Taus?), Guayaquil, (1933)

Previnoticiario, Guayaquil? 1940-1950 by Banco la Previsora

Manuel J. Cobos - Historia de un Pionero by Jacinto Gordillo, Galápagos (1987)

With the exception of the last couple in the above list these citations were taken from *Manuel J Cobos - Su Vida y Su Obra* by Dr. Octavio Latorre Tapia.

Some of the other newspapers published in Guayaquil during this period were; *Gil Bas* 1904, *El Mercurio* 1908-1911, *El Pobrecito Hablador* 1910-1915, *El Guante* 1910-1926 and *El Grito del Pueblo* 1916-1918.

Michael Anderson, Al Buonaguro, Melvin Hoyos, Holland Wallace and David Wolfer provided information and other assistance which was critical to the development of this article. Brian Stickney, Herman Blanton, David Castro, Rich Hartzog, Vicente Veintimilla, John Woram and others shared pertinent information and/or provided advice, comments and/or documents that were of help. **The purpose of this article is to engender more interest in the subject with the hope of eventually arriving at documented proof of the existence of original counterstamped coins from the Galapagos as well as substantiating, clarifying or debunking any statement that I have made.** Due to a lack of definitive documentation, this is a work in progress and subject to changes or additions based on new information. Any factual mistakes, misinterpretations or flaws of logic will be mine and not that of any contributor.

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